

TOP SECRET

5 February 1958

PROJECT AQUATONE - OPERATIONAL CONCEPT

1. Objectives:

a. Primary objective of the proposed operations is to obtain coverage of 23 extremely high priority targets in the USSR. For operational planning purposes these targets have been grouped into some 13 areas each having homogeneous weather. Three areas have been determined to have higher priority than the other ten.

b. The secondary objective is to obtain as much useful coverage as possible outside of the primary target areas without increasing the total number of missions for this purpose or incurring additional risks.

2. Limitations:

a. Range: Four target areas (including two of the three having top priority) can best be reached from Turkey; [REDACTED]

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b. Weather: The target areas have been defined on the basis of prevailing climatic patterns in such a way that the same weather may be expected to prevail over all of the targets in any one area. Thus each area should be coverable with a single mission. Opportunities may even arise to cover two areas on the same mission. Broadly speaking, during the first six months of the calendar year the largest amount of clear weather occurs over the several target areas at the following times:

Western Russia excluding WHITE SEA AREA -- March, with  
May as second choice

Central Siberia -- February and March

Far East excluding KAMCHATKA -- February and March

KAMCHATKA -- April

TYURA TAM -- April and May

WHITE SEA AREA -- April through June

c. Restrictions: RAINBOW covered aircraft will be employed on all missions with the exception of two areas in eastern central Siberia where the range of aircraft thus equipped is insufficient [REDACTED]

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3. Equipment: Five U-2 aircraft without RAINBOW covering are presently deployed; two in the Far East and three at Adana. Five aircraft are being equipped with RAINBOW. One of these can be available by 25 February, two more by 15 March, and the last two about the end of March.

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4. Operational Concept: Operations will be conducted in the phases given below. Specific target areas will be selected and mission plans prepared on the basis of forecast weather, which will be the limiting factor on the rate of operations.

✓ a. A preliminary mission, designed in part to probe Russian defenses, will be undertaken in the Far East as soon as equipment is available. The target will be selected and the mission planned in such a way as to involve a relatively shallow (300 to 500 miles) penetration over territory which is for the most part sparsely inhabited. (The most probable targets are KOMSOMOLSK or UKRAINA.)

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c. Upon successful completion of the preliminary mission, operations will be conducted from Turkey

against the three top priority target areas,

Missions will be conducted concurrently, as weather permits, against three other target areas in Siberia

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d. After coverage of the three top priority areas has been obtained, missions will be conducted against remaining target areas.

5. Timing: It is believed that the preliminary mission can be carried out in February, that coverage of the three top priority areas can be completed in March, and that coverage of the remaining targets in this series can be completed by the end of April.

6. Future Planning: Upon the conclusion of the above operations, the prospects for this activity will be re-examined with particular reference to: new or outstanding requirements for reconnaissance, intelligence then available on Russian interception capabilities, and the status of developments which might reduce the vulnerability to interception. On the basis of this study, plans for the future of the activity will be formulated and will be reviewed with higher authority.

TS-164857/B

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